

CHAMBERS'S JOURNAL

OF
POPULAR

LITERATURE, SCIENCE, AND ART.

Fourth Series

CONDUCTED BY WILLIAM AND ROBERT CHAMBERS.

No. 611.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 11, 1875.

PRICE 1½d.

PRACTICAL HINTS FOR THE SICK-ROOM.

WHEN a woman thinks of making deliberate choice of the profession of a sick-nurse, she can of course take into careful consideration if her character and temperament are or are not suited for so arduous and trying an avocation. If she is a person of excitable nature, and possessed of but little self-control, she can be wisely counselled to give up the idea of a life for which she is so thoroughly unfit; but no peculiarities of character or temperament can exempt a woman from being called upon by the plain voice of duty, at one time or other of her life, to take her stand by the bedside of one dear to her, and soothe as best she may many a weary hour of restlessness and pain.

Very few, indeed, are the women who escape this rule—most have to take upon themselves the burden of attendance in a sick-room—and perhaps there are few subjects upon which the generality of women are so well intentioned, and yet so ignorant. With the very best and kindest meaning in the world, attention bestowed upon a suffering person may be productive of more discomfort than comfort to the patient, and endless annoyance to the physician, just because the zealous, but alas! untrained and undisciplined volunteer does everything the wrong way.

Again, from a mistaken and unreal idea of true delicacy and refinement, many women shrink from ever seeing or learning anything about suffering or sorrow; and so, when the inevitable fate brings the sights and sounds of pain, the dreadful realities of death, cruelly home to them, they are paralysed by terror, and useless, nay, worse than useless to those most dear to them. Even as I write, sad instances rise before my mind of a lack of moral courage, an utter impossibility of self-command, that has led the mother to flee from the bedside of her dying child, the wife to turn away from the failing sight that yearns to gaze upon her face while life yet lingers! The contemplation of pain could not be borne, because the mind was weakened and enervated by a selfish habit of yielding to the dislike of bravely facing anything disagreeable. Let all

true women train themselves to possess self-control, calmness, and patient courage; let them strive to acquire a certain amount of knowledge of the cares and duties of a sick-room; let them not shrink from hearing the details of this or that form of suffering and disease, and gladly and readily offer help (when they rightly and safely can) outside the bounds of their own immediate home circle. Let them rejoice in any fitting opportunity that may come in their way of perfecting themselves in this, the highest and holiest of a woman's duties, so that when their own time of trial comes they may not fail!

Taking it for granted that there are many who will gladly take a few plain and practical hints on this subject, I shall condense the result of a somewhat long and wide experience into a short space.

And first: It is in things which of themselves appear trifling, and even insignificant, that the comfort of a sick-room is made or marred. For instance, an energetic and amiably intentioned person places a cold pillow beneath the shoulders of a patient suffering from pneumonia, that is, inflammation of the lungs; a fit of coughing, perhaps a restless night, is the result. Five minutes' warming of the pillow at the fire would have prevented all this mischief, and even conducted to sleep.

Dress, again, is a matter of great importance in a sick-room, and here I must enter a protest against that very common practice of the amateur sick-nurse making a 'guy' of herself. I really have seen such startling and unpleasant costumes donned 'for the occasion,' as seemed to me enough to cause delirium in the patient, if long contemplated—shawls, and dressing-gowns, and wraps of such an obsolete and awful character, that the shadow of the watcher cast upon the wall by the dim light of the night-lamp, must form a horrible 'old granny,' and be, by no means a *pleasing reflection* to meet a sick man's eyes, as he wakes weak and confused from an opiate-won sleep!

The best dress for a sick-room is plain black—for the simple reason that no stain shews upon it—an old silk is the most economical, but silk

rustles, and is therefore objectionable. Black lustre is very serviceable—not made long enough to trail, upset chairs, and get under the doctor's feet; and not having hanging sleeves, but fitting close and neat at the wrist, so as to be finished off by nice white linen cuffs. (I have seen a hanging sleeve catch on some projecting point of chair or table, and convert a glass of egg-flip into a 'douche' externally applied, swamping the patient in a yellow sea, besides sending her into hysterics.) A habit of moving quietly about the room, and yet not treading 'on tip-toe' and making every board in the floor creak its loudest, is also very advisable; and nothing can be better by way of 'chaussure' than those soft, warm felt boots now so common; they both keep the nurse's feet from becoming cold, and make the least possible sound in moving about. Of course the manner of speaking in a sick-room is all-important. Oh, the horror of that dreadful 'pig's whisper,' which penetrates to the inmost recesses of the room, and wakes the sleeping patient as surely as the banging of a door!

I call to mind a case of fever—a very bad case, in which sleep was the one desideratum—almost the only hope. The sufferer had fallen into a doze—the terrible throbbing of the arteries in the bared throat seemed a little less rapid—the fire that was burning life away raged a little less fiercely—but, some idiot peeped in through a half-closed door, and with horrible contortions of the visage, intended to express extreme caution, whispered in blood-chilling tones: 'How—is—he—getting—on—now?'

In an instant, the patient had raised himself in bed, the poor hot hands were thrown out to ward off he knew not what—the filmy eyes stared wildly round—the parched tongue faltered: 'What is it? Where is it?' And for hours the weary head tossed from side to side, and meaningless words fell on the ears of those who watched and waited, and almost feared to hope. And yet it was meant in kindness!

In some of the most severe diseases, such as cholera and diphtheria, the patient is often *intensely* conscious of all that is passing around him. The wish to know everything that is said and done is extreme, and nothing excites a patient so much as anything like whispering and mystery. The natural voice, only so much lowered as to be perfectly distinct, is then the proper tone for a sick-room. If silence is needed, let it be complete, and no whispering permitted either in the room, or, worse still, outside the door.

And now I must say a few words on a disagreeable, but yet most important subject. In any case where operative surgery is necessary, it cannot be too strongly insisted upon, that no one shall remain present whose calmness and self-control are not a certainty. I remember well a delicate and difficult operation having to be performed—not a painful one, but where success mainly depended on the perfect stillness of the patient. Scarcely had the first slight incision been made, when the

room resounded with the moans and cries, not of the sufferer, but the friend who had kindly come to support her through the ordeal! With many a sob, and choke, and gurgle, the friend was assisted from the room, and then all went well enough; but great delay, and much increase of nervousness on the part of the patient, naturally resulted.

One of the many very eminent surgeons of whom America can boast, once told me that on the occasion of performing a most formidable operation, in which promptitude was a vital necessity, he saw, at a moment when seconds were precious, a friend who had insisted on remaining present, suddenly turn deadly pale, and fall fainting on the floor, in uncomfortably close proximity to the chloroformed patient. Dr B— stooped down, and, *sans façon*, quietly rolled the insensible individual into a corner of the room, where he enjoyed undisturbed repose, until such time as some one had time to 'bring him to.'

Thus it may be seen that any one who is in the least nervous, and cannot be certain of their own powers of self-command, acts with truer kindness in remaining absent from such scenes, than by becoming an added source of anxiety, where there is so much already of the gravest character. If, however, a woman has the moral courage to face such trials calmly, and without flurry—if she can do simply what she is told, and *nothing more*—if she can hold her tongue—wholly dismiss herself from her own mind, concentrating all her attention on the patient, she may be of untold help and comfort. On the other hand, a sick-nurse who asks the doctor endless questions—who presumes in her ignorance to criticise his treatment—who is spasmodic in her sympathy, and ejaculatory in her lamentations, is pestilent in a sick-room, and should, if possible, be got rid of at any cost.

But as well as the nervous and excitable nurse, there is another species of the genus against whom I would warn any one who in the least values his own comfort, and that is, the person who insists upon 'helping you' to nurse some very severe case, and never ceases assuring you that she 'keeps up splendidly at the time, but afterwards —;' and then comes an ominous shake of the head, which is a ghastly intimation of what a time you will have of it with her, when what she is pleased to call the 'reaction' sets in. Nothing can be more aggravating than to contemplate such an individual, and look forward to the 'breaking-down' which she assures you is inevitable, and which you feel assured will come just when you and everybody else are tired out with nursing the real sufferer, and when you want to go to bed, and sleep your sleep out. The very idea of having to put hot-water bottles to her feet, and mustard poultices to her side, and cooling lotions to her aching brow, and watch her *se posant en martyr* (the while you are wishing her at Jericho, or some other equally hard-to-get-back-from place), is not a pleasant anticipation, as you sit opposite to her through a long night of

watching, and she tells you, with a melancholy yet vainglorious countenance, how she shall 'pay for this afterwards.' But she treats with scorn your suggestion that she should go to bed—indeed, she would be bitterly disappointed if she might not immolate herself—and you. This sort of thing is what I call 'selfish unselfishness,' a kind of self-sacrifice that is always acting as its own bill-poster.

But there is one kind of nervousness which I do not think meets with sufficient consideration, and that is the unconquerable fear which you will find some people have of any disease that is infectious. Now, I think this sort of fear is far more constitutional than mental, and it appears to me most uncharitable to speak of those who are thus nervous by temperament as 'so frightened,' &c. Depend upon it, if any one has a great dread of infection, he is far better away from the chance of it. If I heard a person express a great and overpowering dread of small-pox, cholera, fever, or diphtheria, I should do all in my power to prevent that person going near any case of the kind, because I should be morally certain of the result. As a rule, I believe that those who are perfectly fearless are comparatively safe; and there is no truer test of perfect freedom from nervous dread than the fact of being able to sleep at once, quietly and naturally, and without the mind being obliged to dwell upon the work of the day. The best cholera nurse I ever saw used to tell me that she often sat down in the corner of a room, on the floor, and 'slept right off' for half an hour at a time, either day or night, just as such opportunity for rest presented itself. But of course there are exceptions to all rules; and one of the most devoted and the most fearless in attendance on the sick, during a terrible epidemic, died just when the worst of the battle seemed over.

But to return to some of those 'trifles,' the knowledge of which is so needful to those who would try to fulfil well the duties of an amateur sick-nurse.

When active personal care of a sick person is undertaken, the finger-nails should be kept very short. I have seen a long nail tear open a blister, and expose a raw surface, causing great pain. For the same reason, all removable rings should be taken off; and any ornaments that hang loose, and make a jingling noise, are best dispensed with, as they irritate and annoy a sensitive patient.

It seems to me that this very unpretending paper will be hardly complete without a few words as to the diet that is best for any one acting as sick-nurse in a long and trying case.

One great point is, to let no silly notions of sentiment prevent you making a practice of taking substantial and regular meals; and when you have to sit up all night, be sure and have food at hand, and never go more than three hours without eating. Now, I am going to say what I know many will highly disapprove of—and it is this: when you are nursing a long and anxious case, and you want to be able to 'stay' to the end,

avoid all stimulants. There is nothing you can do such hard work upon, there is nothing that will support you in long-continued watching and fatigue, like good, well-made coffee. Stimulants only give a temporary excitement, that passes itself off as strength. They injure that clearness of thought, that perfect quietude and recollectedness which are so essential to the good sick-nurse; and they tend more than anything else to that miserable 'breaking down afterwards' of which I have already spoken.

THE FLAG OF DISTRESS.

CHAPTER XV.—ON PLEASURE BENT.

THE clocks of San Francisco are striking the hour of ten. The moon has shot up over Monte Diablo, and sends her soft mellow beams across the waters of the Bay, imparting to their placid surface the sheen of silver. The forms of the ships anchored upon it are reflected as from a mirror; with masts upside down, every spar, stay, and brace, even to the most delicate rope of their rigging, having its duplicated representative in the fictitious counterfeit beneath. On none is there any canvas spread, and the unfurled flags do not display their fields, but hang motionless along masts, or droop dead down over taffrails. Stillness, almost complete, reigns throughout; scarce a sound proceeding either from the ships inshore, or those that ride at anchor in the offing; not even the rattle of a chain dropping or heaving an anchor, the chant of a night-watch at the windlass, or the song of some jovial tar entertaining his messmates as they sit squatted around the fore-castle stair. Unusual this silence at such an early hour, though easily accounted for. That there are but few noises from the ships in San Francisco Bay, is explained by the fact of their having but few men to make them—in many cases there being not a single soul aboard. All have deserted, either for good, and are gone off to the 'diggings,' or only for the night, to take part in the pleasures and dissipations of the town. Now and then a boat may be seen, putting off from, or returning to, the side of some of those better manned—by its laborious movement, and the unmeasured stroke of oars, telling that even it lacks a full complement of crew.

Inside the town, everything is different. There, there are noises enough, with plenty of people, crowded streets, flashing lights, and a Babel-like confusion of voices. It is now the hour when iniquity has commenced its nightly career, or, rather, reached its full flush; since in San Francisco certain kinds of it are carried on openly and throughout all the hours of day. Business houses are closed; but these are in small proportion to the places of pleasure, which keep their doors and windows wide open, and where dissipation of all kinds reigns paramount. Into the gambling saloons go men laden with gold-dust, often coming out with their wallets lighter than when they went in, but their hearts a great deal heavier. After toiling for months up to their middle in the chill waters

of streams that course down from the eternal snows of the Sierra Nevada, working, washing—while so occupied, half-starving—they return to San Francisco to scatter in a single night—oft in one hour—the hoarded gatherings of half a year!

Into this pandemonium of a city are about to enter two personages of very different appearance from those usually seen loitering in its saloons or hastening through its streets; for they are the young officers belonging to the British frigate—Edward Crozier and William Cadwallader—returning to their ship. Not directly, as they were rowed ashore, but through the town; Crozier having ordered the boat to be brought to one of the rough wooden wharfs recently erected. They are advancing along the shore-road afoot, having declined their host's offer of horses; both saying they would prefer to walk; Cadwallader adding, in sailor phrase, that he wished to 'kick the knots out of his legs'—a remark but obscurely comprehensible to Don Gregorio. For some time after leaving his house not a word passes between them. Each is occupied with his own thoughts, the sacredness of which keeps him silent; absorbed in reflections, springing from that tender but painful parting with others, about what may be before them in the far uncertain future. For a time, nothing intrudes upon their reverie, to disturb its natural course. The sigh of the tidal surf breaking upon the beach, the occasional cry of a straying sea-bird, or the more continuous and monotonous note of the chuck-will's-widow, do not attract their attention. They are sounds in consonance with their reflections, still a little sad. As they draw nearer to the city, see its flashing lights, and hear its hum of voices, other and less doleful ideas come uppermost, leading to conversation. Crozier commences it:

'Well, Will, old fellow, we've made a day of it.'

'That we have—a rousing jolly day. I don't think I ever enjoyed one more in my life.'

'Only for its drawbacks.'

'You mean our affair with those fellows? Why, that was the best part of it—so far as fun. To see the one in the sky-blue wrap, after I'd dirked his horse, go off like a ship in a gale, with nobody at the helm! By Jove! it was equal to old Billy Button in the circus. And then the other, you bundled over in the road, as he got up looking like a dog just out of a dust-bin! Oh! 'twas delicious! The best shore-adventure I've had since joining the *Crusader*—something to talk about when we get aboard.'

'Ay, and something to do besides talking. We've got a little writing to do—at least I have, a bit of a letter to this swaggerer, Mr Francisco de Lara.'

'But, surely, you don't intend challenging him—after what's happened?'

'Surely I do. Though, to say the truth, I've no great stomach for it, seeing the sort he is. It's *infra dig.* having to fight one's inferior, though it

be with swords or pistols. It feels like getting into a row with roughs in some slum of a seaport.'

'You're right there; and as to calling this fellow out, I'd do nothing of the kind, Ned. He's a bad lot; so is the other. Blackguards both, as their behaviour has shewn them, they don't deserve to be treated as gentlemen.'

'But we're in California, Will; where the code of the duel takes in such as they. I suppose even here thieves and cut-throats talk about protecting their honour, as they term it; ay, and often act up to their talk. I've been told of a duel that took place not long since between two professional gamblers, in which one of them was shot dead in his tracks. And only the other day a judge was called out by a man he had tried, and convicted, of some misdemeanour; who not only went, but actually killed the fellow who'd stood before him as a criminal! All that seems very absurd, but so it is. And if this scarlet-cloaked cavalier don't shew the white-feather, and back out, I'll either have to kill or cripple him; though like enough he may do one, or the other, for me.'

'But don't you think, Ned, you've had enough out of him?'

'In what way?'

'Why, in the way of *revanche*. For my part, I should decidedly say you had far the best of it. After your first encounter in the morning I thought differently, and would have so counselled you. Then the insult offered you was unpunished. The other has put a different face on the affair; and now that he's got more than he gave, I think you should rest satisfied, and let things stand as they are—if he do. Certainly, after that knock and tumble, it's his place to sing out.'

'There's something in what you say, Will. And now, on reflection, I'm not so sure that I'll take further trouble about the fellow, unless he insist on it; which he may not, seeing he's unquestionably base coin—as you say, a blackguard. He appears a sort of Californian bravo; and if we hadn't secured his pistols, I suppose he'd have done some shooting with them. Well, we'll see whether he comes to reclaim them. If he don't, I shall have to send them to him. Otherwise, he may have us up before one of these duelling justices on a charge of robbing him!'

'Ha, ha, ha! That would be a rare joke; an appropriate ending to our day's fun.'

'Quite the contrary. It might be serious, if it should reach the ears of Bracebridge. The old disciplinarian would never believe but that we'd been in the wrong—taken the fellow's pistols from him for a lark, or something of the sort. True, we could have the thing explained, both to the San Franciscan magistrate, and the frigate's captain; but not without an exposure of names and circumstances, that, though it might be appropriate enough, would be anything but a pleasant finale to our day's fun, as you call it.'

'Well, I know what will,' rejoins Cadwallader,

after listening patiently to his comrade's explanatory speech, 'and that's a glass of something good. Those sweet Spanish wines of Don Gregorio have made me thirsty as a fish. Besides, parting with my dear Inez has got my heart down, and I need something to get it up again.'

'All right, my hearty!' exclaims Crozier; for the jest's sake, talking sailor-slang—'I'm with you in that way. For this day at least we've had enough of war; therefore, let's end it with another *w*—wine.'

'For my part,' responds the young Welshman, 'I'd prefer a different article, which has the other *w* for its initial letter—that's whisky. If we could only get a glass of good Scotch or Irish malt in this mushroom city, it would make a new man of me—which just now I need making. As I tell you, Ned, my heart's down—dead down to the heels of my boots. I can't say why, but there it is; and there, I suppose, it'll stay, unless Dutch courage comes to the rescue.'

'Well, you'll soon have an opportunity of getting that. As you see, we're in the suburbs of this grand city, partly constructed of canvas; where, though food may be scarce, and raiment scanty, there's liquor in abundance. In the *Parker House*, which is, I believe, its best hotel, we'll be sure of finding almost every beverage brewed upon the earth—among them your favourite whisky, and mine—Bass's Bitter.'

'Again the Spanish saw, "*Cada uno a su gusto*," as just now my sweetheart said. But let us step out.'

'Don't be in such hot haste. You forget we've something to do; which must be done first—before everything else.'

'What?'

'Look up Harry Blew—find him, if we can, and coax him to take service in this Chilean ship.'

'He won't require much coaxing, once you say the word. The old salt is anything but ungrateful. Indeed, his regard for you, ever since you saved him from that shark, is more like real gratitude than anything I ever saw. He fairly worships you, Ned. He told me the day before he left the *Crusader*, that parting with you was the only thing that greatly grieved him. I saw the tears trickling down his cheeks, as you shook hands with him over the side. Even then, if you'd said stay, I believe he'd have turned back into his old berth.'

'I didn't, because I wished him to do better. You know he'd have a splendid chance here in California—to get rich by gold-digging, which no doubt he might, like a great many other humble sailors as himself. But now, this other chance has turned up in his favour, which I should say is surer. Don Gregorio has told us he can get from the Chilean captain almost any pay he may please to ask; besides, a fair likelihood of being made his first-mate. That would suit Harry to a hair; besides, in my opinion,

answering his purpose far better than any gold-seeking speculation. Though a man of first rating aboard ship, he's a mere child when ashore; and would be no more able to protect himself against the land-sharks of San Francisco, than he was to get out of the way of that sea-skimmer at Guaymas. Even if he should succeed in growing rich up the rivers, I'd lay large odds, he'd be back here in port, and poor as ever, within a week. We must save him from that, if we can. His natural element is the ocean. He has spent the greater part of his life on it, and here's a fine opportunity for him to return to, and stay upon it; for life if he likes, with better prospects than he could even have had on board a man-o'-war. The question is, how we shall be able to find him in this rookery of a place. Did he say anything, when you saw him, about where he was sojourning?'

'By Jove! he just did. Now, I recall our conversation, I remember him telling me that he was staying at a sort of boarding-house, or restaurant, called the "*Sailor's Home*," though he made no mention of the street. But, if I mistake not, I know the place, and can steer pretty straight for it.'

'Straight or crooked, let's set head for it at once. We've plenty of time, if that were all, for I told the coxswain not to come for us till well after eleven. I want to see something of this queer Californian life, of which I haven't had much experience yet.'

'The same with myself.'

'Well, we may never again get such a chance. Indeed, it's not likely we shall, either of us, be allowed another night ashore, before the *Crusader* sails; therefore, let us make hay while the sun shines, or, to speak less figuratively, a little merriment by the light of the moon. We've been either savage or sentimental all the day, and stand in need of changing our tune.'

'You're right about that; but the music is not likely to be made by moonlight—not much of it. See those great clouds rolling up yonder! They'll be over the sky in ten minutes' time, making everything black as a pot of pitch.'

'No matter; for what we want, gas-light will serve as well; and there's plenty of that in San Francisco. Now, for Harry Blew. After him, whisky punches at the *Parker*.'

'And after that?'

'The tables, if you feel so inclined.'

'Surely, Ned, you don't want to go gambling?'

'I want to see life in San Francisco, as I've said; and, as you know, gambling's an important part of it. Yes; I don't mind making an attempt to draw the teeth of the tiger. *Allons!* or, as I should say in the softer language of Andalusia, *Nos vamos!*'

Thus jocosely terminating the conversation, the young officers continue on at increased speed, and are soon threading the streets of San Francisco in search of the *Sailor's Home*.

CHAPTER XVI.—A TAR OF THE OLDEN TYPE.

Harry Blew is a tar of the true man-o'-war type; this of the olden time, when sailors were sailors, and ships were of oak, not iron. Such ships are scarce now; but scarcer still the skilled men who handled their ropes, and kept everything taut and trim—in short, the true sailors.

Than Harry, a finer specimen of the foremast-man never reefed topsail, or took his glass of grog according to allowance. Of dark complexion naturally, exposure to sun, sea, and storm has deepened it, till his cheeks and throat are almost copper-coloured; of somewhat lighter tint on Sundays, after they have had their hebdomadal shave. His face is round, with features fairly regular, and of a cheerful cast; their cheerfulness heightened by the sparkle of bright gray eyes, and two rows of sound white teeth, frequently, if not continuously set in a smile. A thick shock of curling brown hair, with a well-greased ringlet drooping down over each eyebrow, supports a round-rimmed, blue-ribboned hat, set well aback on his head. His shaven chin is pointed and prominent, with a dimple below the lip; while the beardless jaws curve smoothly down to a well-shaped neck, symmetrically set upon broad shoulders, that give token of strength almost herculean. Notwithstanding an amplitude of shirt-collar which falls back full seven inches, touching the shoulder-tips, the throat and a portion of the expansive chest are habitually exposed to view; while on the sun-browned skin of the latter may be seen a tattooed anchor. By its side, not so plainly exposed, is the figure of a damsel done in dark-blue—no doubt a souvenir, if not the exact similitude, of a sweetheart—some Poll of past time, or perhaps far-off port. But there is a doubt whether Harry's heart has been true to her. Indeed, a suspicion of its having been false cannot fail to strike any one seeing him with his shirt sleeves rolled up; since upon the flat of his right fore-arm is the image of another damsel, done more recently, in lighter blue; while on the left is a Cupid holding an unbent bow, and hovering above a pair of hearts his arrow has just pierced, impaling them through and through. All those amorous emblems would seem to argue our true tar inconstant as the wind, with which he has so often to contend. But no; nothing of the kind. Those well acquainted with him and his history, can vouch for it that he has never had a sweetheart save one—she represented in that limning of light blue, and to her was he true as steel, up to the hour of her death, which occurred just as she was about to become Mrs Blew. And that sad event has kept him a bachelor up to the present hour of his life. The girl on his breast in dark blue is a merely mythical personage, though indelibly stained into his skin by a needle's point and a pinch of gunpowder, done by one of his man-o'-war shipmates while he was still only a sailor-lad. He is now forty years of age, nearly thirty of which he has passed upon the sea; being off it only in short spells, while his ship has been in port. And he has seen service on several ships—corvettes, frigates, double and treble deckers—all men-of-war, in which he has thrice circumnavigated the globe. For all, he is yet hale, hearty, and in the perfect plenitude of his strength; only with a slight stoop in the shoulders, as if caught from continually swarming up shrouds, or leaning over the yard while stowing sails. This gives him the appearance of being shorter than he really is: for when straightened up, with back well braced, he stands six feet in his stockings. And his limbs shew symmetrical proportion. His duck trousers, fitting tightly over the hips, display a pair of limbs supple and sinewy, with thighs that seem all muscle from skin to bone.

In spite of his sterling qualities as a seaman, and noble character as a man, Harry has never risen to any rank in the service. With him has it been literally true, 'Once a sailor, still a sailor;' and though long ago rated an A.B. of the first order, above this he has not ascended a single step. Were he to complain, which he rarely ever does, he would in all probability say that non-promotion has been due to independence of spirit, or, shaping it in his own phraseology, owing to his 'not having bootlicked the swabs above him.' And there is some truth in this, though another reason might be assigned by those disposed to speak slightly of him: that although liking salt-water, he has a decided antipathy to that which is fresh, unless when taken with an admixture of rum. Then he is too fond of it. It is his only fault; barring which, a better man than Harry Blew—and, when sober, a steadier—never trod the deck of a ship.

As already said, he has trod many, the latest being that of the *Crusader*; in which vessel he has spent five years of his life. His engagement terminating almost on the very day she dropped anchor before San Francisco, he has been set free; either to stay in the ship, by entering his name upon her books for a fresh period of service, or step out of her, and go cruising on his own account whithersoever he may wish. Taking into consideration the state of things in San Francisco just at this very time, it is not strange that he elected to leave the ship. It would be stranger if he had even hesitated about it; though this he had indeed done, for some days lingering, with mind only half made up. But the golden lure proved at length too temptingly attractive; and, yielding to it, he took a last leave of his old shipmates, was pulled ashore, and has since been sojourning at the Sailor's Home—for he is still there, as Cadwallader rightly surmised.

The Sailor's Home is a hostelry, half eating-house, half drinking-saloon, of somewhat unpretentious appearance—being a rough, weather-boarded house, without planing or paint, and only two stories in height. But if low in structure, it is high enough in its charges, as Harry Blew has learned; these being out of all proportion to the outside appearance of the place and its interior accommodation, though in keeping with the prices of all other like houses of entertainment in San Francisco. Harry's original intention was to make only a short stay at the Sailor's Home—just long enough to put him through a bit of a spree, for which twelve months' pay, received from the frigate's purser at leaving, had amply provided him. Then he would start for the Feather River, or some other tributary stream of the Sacramento. The first part of this programme has been already carried out, with something besides; that something being the complete expenditure of all his pay—every shilling he received from the purser, and in an incredibly short space of time. He has been scarcely six days ashore when he discovers his cash exchequer quite cleared out. As for credit, there is no such thing in San Francisco.

Since landing, Harry has not very carefully kept his dead reckoning, and is at first somewhat surprised to find himself so far out in it. He has plunged his hands into his pockets without encountering coin. He has searched in his sea-chest and every other receptacle where he has been

accustomed to carry cash, with similar disappointing result. What can have become of his twelve months' wage, drawn on the day he left the *Crusader*? It has all disappeared! No wonder he is unable to account for its disappearance; for ever since that day, he has been anything but himself—in short, he has given way to dissipation of longer continuance than ever before in his life. It has lasted six days, with most part of six nights, at the end of which time he has only pulled up for the want of cash to continue it—credit being declined him at the very counter over which he has passed all his pay.

Impecuniosity is an unpleasant predicament in any country, and at all times; but in the San Francisco of 1849 it was a positive danger—where six dollars were demanded and obtained for the most meagre of meals; the same for sleeping on a blanketless bed, in a chilly night, within a rough weather-boarded room, or under the yet thinner shelter of a canvas tent. It was a boon to be allowed to lie on the lee-side of a wooden-walled stable; but cost money for the privilege of sleeping in a stall, with straw litter for couch, and the heat of the horses in lieu of coverlet.

In the necessity of seeking some such indifferent accommodation, Harry Blew finds himself, on the seventh night after having received his discharge from the *Crusader*. And as he has now got somewhat sobered, with brain clear enough to think, it occurs to him that the time is come for carrying out the second part of his programme—that is, going on to the gold-diggings. But how to get off, and then? These are separate questions, to neither of which can he give a satisfactory answer. Passage to Sacramento, by steamer, costs over a hundred dollars, and still more by stage. He has not a shilling—not a red cent; and his sea-kit sold would not realise a sum sufficient to pay his fare, even if it (the kit) were free. But it is not. On the contrary, embargoed, quodded by the keeper of the Sailor's Home, against a couple of days of unpaid board and lodging—with sundry imbibings across the counter, still scored on the slate.

The discharged man-o'-war's-man sees himself in a dread dilemma—all the more from its having a double horn. He can neither go to the gold-diggings, nor stay in the Sailor's Home. Comparatively cheap as may be this humble hostelry, it is yet dear enough to demand ten dollars a day for indifferent bed and board. This has been bad enough for Harry Blew, even though but a foremastman. But he is threatened with a still worse condition of things. Inappropriate the title bestowed on his house, for the owner of the 'Home' has not the slightest hospitality in his heart. He has discovered that his English guest is impecunious; this by the two days' board, and as many nights' bed, remaining unpaid. There is a notice conspicuously posted above the bar, that 'scores must be settled daily.' And Harry Blew having disregarded this, has received private but positive notice of another kind, to the effect, that he is forthwith to discontinue taking a seat at the *table-d'hôte*, as also to surrender up his share of the bed he has been occupying. At this, the discharged man-o'-war's-man has shewn no anger, nor does he feel in any way affronted. He has that correct sense common to sailors, with most others who have seen travel in strange lands, and knows that when cash is not forthcoming, credit

cannot be expected. In California, as elsewhere, such is the universal and rigorous custom, to which man must resign himself. The English sailor is only a bit sorry to think he has expended his cash so freely; a little repentant at having done it so foolishly; and, on the whole, a good deal down-hearted.

But there is a silver lining to the cloud. The *Crusader* is still in port, and not expected to sail for some days. He may once more place his name upon the frigate's books, and rejoin her. He knows he will not only be received back by her commander, but welcomed by all his old officers and shipmates. A word spoken to the first boat coming ashore, and all will be well. Shall he speak such word? That has become the question. For in this, as every other step in life, there is a *pro* and *contra*. Humiliating the thought of going back to service on the ship, after taking leave of everybody aboard; returning to a dingy fore-castle, to toil, and the handling of tarry ropes, after the bright dreams he has been indulging in. To forego the gathering of gold-dust, and the exchanging it for doubloons or dollars; in short, turning his back upon fortune—the prospect of a life competence, perhaps plenitude of wealth, with its resulting ease and idleness—and once more facing stormy seas, with only hard knocks and laborious work in store for him throughout the rest of his life!

While the sovereigns were still clinking in his pockets, this was the dark side of the picture—towards Sacramento, the bright one. Now that the pockets are empty, everything seems changed, and the silver lining lies on the side of the ship. Still the sailor hesitates how to decide. Despite the pressure upon him, he ponders and reflects; as he does so, plunging his hands into his pockets, apparently searching for coin. It is merely mechanical, for he knows he has not a shilling.

While thus occupied, he is seated in the little sanded bar-room of the 'Home,' alone with the bar-keeper; the latter eyeing him with anything but a sympathetic air. For the book is before him, shewing that indebtedness for bed and board, to say nothing of the unsettled bar-score, and the record makes a bar-sinister between them. Another drink could not be added now, even though but a bottle of ginger-beer. The door of credit is closed, and only cash could procure an extension of a hospitality hitherto scant enough.

The sailor thinks. Must he surrender? Give up his dreams of fingering yellow gold, and return to handling black ropes? A glance at the grim, unrelaxed, and unrelenting visage of the bar-keeper decides him. His decision is expressed in characteristic speech, not addressed to the drink-dispenser, nor aloud, but in low, sad soliloquy:

'Wi' me, I see, the old sayin's to stan' good—
"Once a sailor, still a sailor." Harry, you'll steer back for the *Crusader*!'

CHAPTER XVII.—UNEXPECTED VISITORS.

Having resolved upon returning to his ship—and that very night, if he can but get a boat—Harry Blew is about to sally forth into the street, when his egress is unexpectedly prevented. Not by the landlord of the Sailor's Home, nor his representative, who would be only too glad to get

rid of a guest with two days' reckoning in arrear. For they have surreptitiously inspected his sea-chest, and found it to contain a full suit of 'Sunday go-ashores,' with other effects, which they deem sufficient collateral security for the debt. And as it has been already hypothecated for this, both Boniface and bar-keeper would rather rejoice to see their sailor guest clear out of the Home for good, leaving the sea-chest behind him. On this condition they would be willing to wipe out the debt, both boarding and bar-score.

Harry has no thought of thus parting with his kit. Now that he has made up his mind to return to the *Crusader*, a better prospect is opened up to him. He has hopes, that on his making appearance aboard, and again entering his name on the frigate's books, the purser will advance him a sum sufficient to release the kit. Or, he can in all likelihood collect the money among his old messmates. Not for this reason only is he anxious to reach the ship that night, but because he has no other chance of having any place to sleep in, save the street. Both landlord and bar-keeper have notified him, in plain terms, that he must peremptorily leave; and he is about to act upon their notification, and take his departure, when prevented, as already said. What has hindered him from going out of the Home is a man coming into it; or rather two—since two shadows have suddenly darkened the door, and are projected across the sanded floor of the bar-room. Not like shadows in the eyes of Harry Blew, but streaks of brightest sunlight! For in the individuals entering he recognises two of his officers; one of them his best friend, and the preserver of his life. Crozier and Cadwallader have found him.

At sight of them the discharged sailor salutes promptly, and with as much respect, as if it were on the quarter-deck of the *Crusader*. But with much more demonstration; for their well-timed appearance draws from him an exclamation of joy. Jerking off his straw hat, and giving a twitch to one of his brow-locks, he bobs his head several times in succession, with a simultaneous back-scrape of his foot upon the floor.

His obeisance ended, he stands silently awaiting whatever communication the young officers have to make. He is already aware that their business is with himself; for the bar-room is but dimly lit, and Crozier, while crossing its threshold, not at once recognising him, called out the question: 'Is there a sailor staying here, by name Harry Blew?'

'Ay, ay, sir!' was the prompt response, the sailor himself giving it, along with the salutation described.

During the short interval of silence that succeeds, Harry's heart can be distinctly heard beating. Lately depressed—'Down in the dumps,' as he himself would word it—it is now up to his throat. The sight of his patron, the preserver of his life, is like having it saved a second time. Perhaps they have come to ask him to rejoin the ship? If so, 'tis the very thing he was thinking of. He will not anticipate, but waits for them to declare their errand.

'Well, Harry, old boy,' says Crozier, after warmly shaking the sailor's hand, 'I'm right glad to find you here. I was afraid you'd gone off to the diggings.'

'True, Master Ed'ard; I did intend standin' on that tack, but han't been able to get under way, for want o' a wind.'

'Want of a wind? I don't quite understand you.'

'Why, you see, sir; I've been a little bit spreeish since comin' ashore, and my locker's got low—more'n that, it's total cleared out. Though I suppose there's plenty o' gold in the diggin's, it takes gold to get there; and as I ha'n't any, I'm laid up here like an old hulk foul o' a mud-bank. That's just how it is, gentlemen.'

'In which case, perhaps you mightn't feel indisposed to go to sea again?'

'Just the thing I war thinkin' o', Master Ed'ard. I'd a most made up my mind to it, sir, an' war 'bout startin' to try get aboard the old *Crusader*, and askin' your honour to ha' my name entered on her books again. I'm willin' to join for a fresh term, if they'll take me.'

'They'd take and be glad to get you, Harry; you may be sure of that. Such a skilled sailor as you need never be without a ship, where there's a British man-of-war within hailing distance. But we don't want you to join the *Crusader*.'

'How is that, sir?'

'Because we can help you to something a little better. At least, it will be more to your advantage in a pecuniary sense. You wouldn't mind shipping in a merchant-vessel, with wages three or four times as much as you can get in a man-of-war? How would you like that, Harry?'

'I'd like it amazin'ly, sir. And for the matter o' being a merchanter, that's neither here nor there, so long's you recommend it. I'll go as cook, if you tell me to.'

'No, no, Harry, not that,' laughingly replies the young officer. 'That would never do. I should pity those who had to eat the dishes you'd dress for them. Besides, I should be sorry to see you stewing your strength away in front of a galley-fire. You must do better than that; and, it chances, I'm authorised to offer you something better. It's a berth on board a trading-ship, and one with some special advantages. She's a Chilean vessel, and her captain is, I believe, either Chilean or Spanish. That won't make any difference to you?'

'Not a doit, sir. I don't care what the ship's colours be, nor what country her skipper, so long's he allows good wages an' plenty o' grub.'

'And plenty of grog too, Harry?'

'Ay, ay, sir. I confess to a weakness for that—leastways three times a day.'

'No doubt you'll get it, as often as you've a mind. But, Harry, I have a word to say about that. Besides my interest in your own welfare, I've another and more selfish one in this Chilean ship. So has Mr Cadwallader. We both want you to be on your best behaviour during the trip you're to take in her. On board will be two lady passengers, as far as Panama; for the ship is bound thither and for other ports beyond—I believe as far as Valparaiso. But the ladies are to land at Panama; and, so long as they're with you, you must do everything in your power to make things agreeable for them. If they should ever be in any danger—from storm, shipwreck, or otherwise—you'll stand by them?'

'Yes, Harry,' adds Cadwallader; 'you'll do that, won't you?'

'Lor, your honours!' replies the sailor, shewing surprise. 'Sure ye needn't a put sich questin to me—a British man-o'-war's-man? I'd do that much, anyhow, out o' sheer starn sense o' duty. But when it come to takin' care o' two ladies—to say nothin' about their bein' so young, an' so beautiful'—

'Avast, Harry! How do you know they are either one or the other?' asks Crozier, surprised; Cadwallader repeating the question.

'Lor love ye, masters! Do ye think a common sailor ha'n't no eyes in his head, for anythin' but ropes an' tar? You forget I wur o' the boat's crew as rowed two sweet creeturs on board the *Crusader*, the night o' the grand dancin'; an' arterward took the same ashore, along wi' two young gentlemen, as went to see 'em home. Sure, sirs, actin' cox on that occasion, I couldn't help hearin' some o' the speeches as passed in the starn-sheets—tho' they wur spoke in the ears o' the saynoritas, soft as the breeze that fanned their fair cheeks, an' brought the colour out on 'em red as Ribsting pippins.'

'Avast again, you rascal! So you've been eavesdropping, haye you? I quite forgot you understood Spanish.'

'Only a trifle, Master Ed'ard.'

'Too much for that occasion.'

'Ah! well, your honour, it may stand me in stead aboard the ship you speak o'.'

'Well, Harry, I'm not going to scold you, seeing that you couldn't help hearing what you did. And now, I may as well tell you that the young ladies you saw that night in the boat are the same who are to be passengers in the Chilian ship. You'll take good care of them, I know.'

'That, you may depend on, sir. Any one as touches hair o' their heads, to do 'em any injury, 'll have to tear the whole o' his off the head o' Harry Blew. I'll see 'em safe to Panama, or never shew there myself. I promise that; an' I think both your honours 'll take the word o' a British man-o'-war's-man.'

'That's enough. Now to give you the necessary directions about joining this ship. She's lying at anchor somewhere about in the Bay. But you 'll find her easily enough. And you needn't go in search of her, till you've seen the gentleman whose name and address are upon this card. You see: "Don Tomas Silvestre," a ship-agent, whose office is down in one of the streets by the strand. Report yourself to him first thing in the morning. In all likelihood he 'll engage you on sight, make out your papers, and give you full directions for getting aboard the ship. It appears she's short of hands; indeed, even without a single sailor. And, by the way, Harry, if you apply soon enough, it's good as certain you 'll be made first-mate; all the more from your being able to speak Spanish. It's too late for you to do anything about it to-night; but don't oversleep yourself. Be at the ship-agent's to-morrow, betimes.'

'Ye can trust me for that, sir. I 'll shew my figurehead there first thing in the mornin'; an' I an't afeerd o' no one gettin' aboard afore me, if they've not gone a'ready.'

'I think no one will be before you—I hope not. Send us word how you have succeeded, as the *Crusader* will likely be in port long enough for us to hear from you. Still, as she may sail on short notice, we may not see you again. Remember,

then, what we've said about the señoritas. We shall rely upon your fidelity.'

'Ay, well may ye, masters. You can both trust your lives to Harry Blew, an' those of them as is dear to you.'

'All right, old boy!' exclaims Crozier, satisfied. 'We must part; but let's hope we 'll meet again. When you get back to England, you know where to find me. Now, good-bye! Give us a grip of your honest hand, and God bless you!'

Saying this, he grasps the horny hand of the sailor, and warmly presses it. The pressure is returned by a squeeze, that gives assurance of more than ordinary friendship. It is a grip of true gratitude; and the look which accompanies it tells of a devoted friendship, bordering on adoration.

Cadwallader also exchanges a like parting salutation; after which, the young officers start off, to continue their cruise through the streets.

THE ZUIDER ZEE.

THE north and very low-lying coast of Holland has on several occasions been inundated in an extraordinary manner by invasions of the German Ocean; and indeed the history of this part of the Netherlands narrates a continuous effort to keep out the sea, and to reclaim land for serviceable purposes. Of the recovery of a large tract of land from an old inundation, the most notable instance is that of drying up the Haarlem lake or sea, by means of steam-pumps and an ingenious system of engineering, and which has been effected within the last twenty years. The Haarlem Sea was a bad case of destruction by water, but nothing to compare to that of the Zuider Zee, which began its dreadful work of intrusion in 1312, and continued to widen the sphere of its operations until 1476. A vast extent of country was submerged, by which flourishing towns and villages were destroyed, and the lives of hundreds of human beings were sacrificed. When the sea had done its worst, a productive district of country measuring about fifteen hundred square miles was covered with salt water, and became absolutely useless.

Even after an interval of four hundred years, the Zuider Zee does not look like a part of the regular ocean. It appears a limitless extent of dull brooding waters, with low marshy borders; so that in many places its shores are imperfectly distinguishable, while attempts to navigate its surface are often attended with extreme danger. Submarine shoals extend to the verge of the horizon, and banks of yellow sand covered by a foot deep of water communicate a peculiar colour to the sea. Add to this the green flat shore, varied only by a steeple or a windmill, and there arises in the mind an impression of deep repose. You have no occasion either to think or to act; you fall into the charm of a calm sweet reverie, and can understand how a race which has had such a landscape before its eyes for centuries, has laid aside its natural impetuosity for the phlegmatic character of the Dutch.

There are, however, few who have circumnavigated this sea; probably not ten persons in

Holland; it is in truth one of the most difficult and dangerous passages. On an ordinary map, nothing looks more easy; but there are banks of sand extending on all sides, and leaving a very narrow channel between them. If a mistake occurs in steering, or a blast of wind throws the vessel on to one of these banks, all is lost. Sad stories are told by sailors, and the wrecks lying about the coast shew plainly the perils of the voyage. A French writer, who is also an artist—M. H. Havard—undeterred by these difficulties, determined to visit the ruins of the old towns before decay had effaced the remembrance of former capitals, like Medemblik and Stavoren, and his *Voyage aux Villes Mortes du Zuidersee* presents us with an interesting account of these out-of-the-world places.

His first object was to choose a suitable boat, drawing very little water, and yet sufficiently commodious to hold six persons, and to carry provisions for twenty-five days. With the exception of bread and a few fresh vegetables, no dependence can be placed on the resources of the country. Water even must be taken, for throughout the north of Holland it has a most objectionable salt flavour, and is injurious to those unaccustomed to its use. It was no easy task to find a captain, but at length one who had never been, but had all the desire, was found. 'With the help of God and a good wind,' said he, 'we shall prosper. I make two conditions: to be the judge of the weather, and not start when it is bad; and not to work on Sunday.'

The crew was of very modest proportions, composed of the captain, his wife, a boy, and a sailor; all were young and agile, and sufficed to handle the little craft. They lived a curious existence, rarely going on land, never sleeping there, but preferring to keep to the waters. The centre of the boat was divided into three compartments; one for a dining-room, which was adorned with old tapestry, a carpet, four chairs, and a table; silver and glass shone from some shelves, and by degrees M. Havard's sketches were hung, as taken, on the walls. The second served as a kitchen; and in the third two hair mattresses were spread on boards, and made admirable beds; the crew were lodged fore and aft. There are few spectacles more striking than the sea on a lovely summer's night, and on the Zuider Zee, nature seems to reach perfection of beauty. Our author is enthusiastic in his admiration, and assures us that such a sight can never be forgotten: the rippling waters reflected the stars in their pearly tints, while three or four lighthouses glowed on the scene with rosy tints. The captain promised us fine weather on the morrow, but he was mistaken; on awaking, the boat was rocking violently, the wind blew furiously through the ropes, and the rain flooded the deck. 'It is well,' said he, 'that we got into port last night, or we should have been wrecked on the Lady's Sandbank; the ropes have been broken like a bit of thread, and the flagstaff is in three pieces.' But with these little

variations the voyage was successful and pleasant; and when the time for parting came, all were sorry to bid adieu, thanks to mutual concessions and similarity of feeling.

One of the prettiest as well as most curious of towns is that of Hoorn. Landing at the pier, which is commanded by a picturesque old tower, a worthy study for the artist, the traveller finds himself in a clear basin of water, bordered by masses of shrubs, large trees, and flowers. Over these peep the belfries and gables of the houses. All are old and striking, covered with carvings and bas-reliefs, the pointed roofs finishing with a spiral staircase, to give a view over the sea. Everywhere are wide porches and granite steps: sculptured wood and chiselled stone alternate with bright-coloured bricks, giving a character of gaiety and freshness, which contrasts singularly with their great age and old-world forms. It seems ridiculous to traverse such streets in modern costume; the wide beaver hat and feather, military boots, and a rapier at the side, would be more in keeping. There are, alas, but few to frequent these deserted streets. Formerly, Hoorn covered the sea with its merchant vessels; a thousand carts, bringing mountains of cheese weekly, appeared at its market; whilst the yearly fair of cattle attracted multitudes of strangers from France, Germany, and the north.

The walls and deep ditch which defended the town still remain, some of the towers are standing, and the rampart is converted into a promenade, covered with trees and gardens. The two gates are magnificent in size and details. One named the Koeport, or Cowgate, testifies to the gratitude of the Dutch to the source of their riches; it is surmounted by two cows lying down, as if contemplating their grazing sisters in the fields beyond; four others also decorate the façade. Through another, called Westgate, there arrived, in 1573, a poor child worn out with fatigue and privation. On a hastily constructed sledge he had, with filial affection, laid his old sick mother, and fled before the Spaniards. Twice he had been arrested on the way, and twice, touched by his pious devotion, he had been permitted to proceed. The people of Hoorn perpetuated the remembrance of this heroic act in a bas-relief carved on the gate.

The weekly market is still held; for, after Alkmaar, the largest cheese-trade is carried on here. Boer-wagen, covered with carvings and bright-coloured paint, drive in to the Waag, or weighing-house; a pretty building of gray stone, with a graceful roof pierced by dormer windows. The cheeses are piled up, their yellow rind shining like gold; and all round walk the calm, silent peasants, dressed in black. Then two will speak a few words, strike the hand several times, bending one or two fingers, and then striking them quickly out—private signals only known to themselves, and thus arrange the purchase. The price is only indicated by the pressure of the hand. When this is concluded, the porters of the Waag

come forward, dressed in white, with a blue, red, or green hat, according to the scales which belong to them; the cheese is then laid on a hand-cart, and officially weighed.

The trade of Holland is chiefly confined to agricultural products and fish. The wide pastures of the island of Texel feed two thousand horned cattle, a thousand horses, and thirty thousand sheep, which are celebrated throughout Europe. Every year twelve thousand of the last are exported, and the quarterly fair is very picturesque, when these flocks of sheep and lambs are shipped off to the continent. Through the basins of Harlingen, the port of Friesland, pass oxen and sheep, pigs and fowls, with mountains of cheese, fruits, and eggs for this country: here resort the provision-dealers of London, to carry away butter-barrels, which are piled up on the docks like cannon-balls in an arsenal. The canals are filled with the heavy-looking *tjalks*, or market-boats, which bring the good things of the country down to the port. Flax is a very important article of cultivation in Friesland; the market of Dokkum is one of the largest in Europe. The chief houses of England, Germany, and France have agents in this little town. The soil is incredibly rich; the peasants are well off; and there are few farmers who do not own some property in addition to the land they rent. It is rarely indeed that a tenant is turned out of his farm; families hold them for centuries, yet the lease is only for five or seven years, and stipulates how many head of cattle are to be fed on the meadows, and how much manure is to be laid on each acre; thus the soil is kept up to a wonderful state of fertility.

When De Ruyter tied to his mast the broom, as an indication that he had swept his enemies from the North Sea, and sailed up the Thames, his squadron had several vessels fitted out by the city of Hoorn. On one were two negroes, who had the boldness to carry away the figure-head from a ship lying in the river. The trophy was brought to Hoorn, and as a remembrance, an escutcheon was carved, and placed on a monument supported by two bronze negroes. Among the notabilities who were born here may be mentioned Abel Tasman, who discovered Tasmania and New Zealand; Jan Koen, who founded Batavia in 1619; and Shouten, who doubled Cape Horn, calling it after his native city.

The peasants of North Holland shew a great passion for colour; the red brick houses have yellow shutters and pale-green window-frames: not content with this, they paint nature itself; up to the lowest branches the trees are covered with white or blue; whilst the walks in the garden are straw-colour, with two red stripes at each side, which do not harmonise well with the closely cut hedges and gay flower-beds. In the village of Opperdoes many of the houses open into the stables, clean as any drawing-room, paved with tiles, and sanded with different colours, where the black and white cows stand on fresh litter, and the pails and buckets shine like gold and vermilion. Through this is the sitting-room, where handsome fresh-coloured girls, in the large cap and golden helmet-shaped head-dress, engage in charming fancy-work.

There are usually two doors to the house: one small one for daily use; the other sculptured, ornamented, and gilded, only to be opened for baptisms, marriages, and funerals. All these are the occasion of

interminable feasts. When the master of the house dies, he is dressed in black, with a white cotton night-cap on his head, and laid in his coffin, the face being uncovered. On the following day the family assemble; the widow, covered with a large black hood, sits at the foot of the corpse, and the religious service begins. When the preacher has ended, she bursts into a loud wail; the coffin is taken up, carried out of the ornamented door, and placed on a car, the widow seating herself on the coffin. Every peasant-woman cuts off her hair on her wedding-day, notwithstanding the remonstrances of her husband. Ornaments of all kinds are put on to cover up this act of vandalism; frontals of gold which are worth twenty or thirty pounds. The origin of this device is said to be, that the Dutch in former days loved the bottle too well, and the feast often terminated in violent quarrels, ending in a regular battle; and the women, wishing to save their heads from these conjugal attentions, adopted a metal helmet. This may be a doubtful interpretation; but it is certain that in many municipalities where conjugal scrimmaging was not unknown, it was the law to charge a husband who beat his wife with the payment of a ham, and two hams when the wife struck her husband.

Medemblik, the old capital of Western Friesland, would be a charming city if animation could be restored to it, but is now like a vast cemetery; a mortal sadness creeps over the solitary traveller as he passes over deserted quays, wide streets, and promenades. Long before Enkhuizen and Hoorn existed, it sheltered kings and their armies. Here resided the famous King Radbod, whom Pépin and Charles Martel did their best to convert to the Christian religion by armies and lances. He even consented to be baptised, but when his foot was in the baptistery, he hesitated, and asked the bishop if the kings his ancestors were in heaven or hell. The bishop replied that they were doubtless in the latter place, seeing that they had not been baptised; then said the king: 'I would rather go where my friends are, than follow the few that are in Paradise.'

One by one the old houses are dropping to pieces; the walls are rent, and the centre of the town is alone inhabited. Formerly, it had the privilege of a mint; fleets were armed; and around its magnificent docks splendid buildings still exist, but are deserted. Black and white cows graze peacefully on the green, which is surrounded by the grandest building in Holland for the construction of ships, now empty; and the former garden belonging to the admiral, once containing the finest collection of plants in Europe, is planted with potatoes.

Unfortunately, the people do not care to preserve their relics. The Stadhuys possessed a remarkable hall, but the wood-carvings have been taken down, and sold to an amateur. The castle, one of the oldest in Holland, where Radbod held his court, has been partially demolished. The remains are very interesting; here was placed the statue of the Friesland goddess Medea, to whom human sacrifices were offered. As it was gilt, and the sun shone upon it, the city received its name from this circumstance—*Medea blickt*, or shines.

Among the other old towns, that of Kampen possesses many antiquities. Of its seven gates, the four best are still standing. The Brothers' Gate,

in the midst of a lovely flower-garden, is one of the finest specimens of the architecture of the sixteenth century. It was named after the monastic order of the Brothers of Common Life, who did a good work in copying and preserving manuscripts. Gerard Groot was their founder, and they lived in absolute poverty, giving all they received to learned clerks who assisted them in their literary labours. There are some remarkably fine churches; but the gem of this old imperial city is the town-hall, which is a real feast to the eye of the artist. It has a façade of brick and stone, high roof pierced with dormer windows, and between every window are pinnacled niches filled with statues of the sixteenth century.

Within are two halls, just as they were when built; decorated with exquisite wood-carving and carved stalls, and seats fastened to the wall. Flags, pikes, halberds, partisans, witnesses to the struggles of old times, garnish the walls, and some formidable syringes of polished brass, shining like gold, which were used to throw boiling oil on assailants who approached too close to the walls. Nothing can give a better idea of a hall of justice in the sixteenth century than the second chamber, with its superb balustrade, stalls divided by Ionic columns, and the chimney-piece of four stages, unequalled in Europe for its fine statues and bas-reliefs.

Happily, the people have preserved their old municipal documents, instead of selling them for waste-paper; now they are priceless. A good library, pictures, and goldsmith's work, belonging to the ancient guilds, are interesting. There is a small gold box, called the bean box, containing twenty-four beans, six of silver-gilt, and eighteen of polished silver. When the members of the council were chosen for particular work, these beans were handed round; those who drew the gilt beans entered on their duties, the rest being rejected.

The island of Marken is entirely occupied by fishermen, and is extremely singular, for, owing to the perfectly level soil, and consequent inundations, the people have raised mounds of earth on which to build their seven villages. The houses are of wood, only one story in height, and painted green, blue, or black, with red-tile roofs; some are raised on poles, and look like immense cages suspended in the air. Of the thousand inhabitants, only women and children are to be met with on week-days—their intrepid husbands being far out on the Zuider Zee, fishing for plaice or herrings. Habituated from infancy to go through danger and fatigue, they are a fine race of men; content with the perfect equality which prevails over the whole island, and wishing for no luxuries, they become small capitalists. The houses are divided into as many rooms as the family requires, the bedroom being the largest and most adorned. The bed is a box in the wall, difficult to get into, and inclosed by curtains. The sheets and pillows are embroidered in open work, forming a kind of Guipure lace peculiar to Marken, and really elegant in design. The walls are covered with blue china, Japanese porcelain, and curiosities: a Friesland cuckoo clock; old brass chandeliers, shining like gold; and the oak cupboard, filled with large glasses and delft ware, complete the picture. Madame Klok, the confectioner of the island, has a splendid collection of china and pictures, as well as six beautifully carved cabinets, equal in style and preservation. These wonderful

relics of old Dutch art enjoy a real celebrity, so that the queen of Holland came last year to see them.

As the island is one huge meadow, the grass is made into hay. Twice a year, mowers come from the continent to cut it; they are called 'green Germans,' with their small helmet-shaped hats and large pipes. Their work ended, they depart, and the young girls turn the hay, and when dry, fill their light barques, then traverse the canals which cross the island in every direction to the port, where it is to be shipped. Nothing is more picturesque than these handsome women in their national costume of red, with large white head-dresses, working in the green fields, their fair hair—for they do not cut it off—fluttering in the breeze. On Sunday, all the boats are inshore; long, brilliantly coloured processions wend their way to church; after which all enjoy the weekly family gathering. Up to midnight, the houses are lighted up, and lanterns flit about; the boats are filling, lovers are parting, wives accompany their husbands, and soon the sea is covered with what resembles a cloud of glow-worms. Quietness settles down, for there is no trade; furniture, dress, beer, and even bread, all come from the mainland.

Though many of the churches were formerly fine examples of medieval architecture, the hand of the iconoclast has destroyed much of their beauty; they are now, as a rule, white-washed, and look cold and bare. That of Wester-Kirk has preserved its marvellous wood-carving in an old pulpit, which was once supported on columns of silver, now exchanged for bronze. The descendants of the Anabaptists or Mennonites still flourish at Harlingen; and though once so violent, are only noted for their mutual and rather exclusive Christian love, as forming one large family. In the church of the Old Catholics at Enkhuizen, the ancient sacerdotal vestments are preserved from the time when the archbishop of Utrecht, their first head, was excommunicated by the pope in 1725.

This is probably the only country where skating races are held. Young and old, rich and poor, enter the arena, which is a long straight canal, and nothing can give an idea of the dizzy rush of the competitors. The prize is always a piece of valuable plate, a trophy which is preserved in the family with great care, for to obtain it the owner must have striven with eighty or a hundred others. When the race is over, every one puts on his or her skates, and crowds cover the canal; here twenty, hand in hand, form a long chain; there an elegant little sledge is pushed by a brother or husband; or the grand carved sledge, gilded and painted with bright colours, is drawn by a fine horse, adorned with red rosettes and bells.

Whether it would be possible, with any practical advantage, to drain the Zuider Zee, and dyke out the ocean, we are unable to say. The Dutch are a most indefatigable and calculating people, and if the thing could be done, or were worth doing, they would do it; thereby adding largely to their available territory. The drainage of the Haarlem sea or lake has, we understand, succeeded commercially. The first time we visited it was in 1838, when we saw a stretch of twenty miles of water. On revisiting Haarlem in 1862, we saw a wide extended series of green fields dotted with farm-houses, and possessing all the indications of rural prosperity. The expulsion of the Zuider Zee

would, however, be a much more serious undertaking; but it would not surprise us to learn that steps at least were taken to greatly circumscribe its dimensions.

THE TWO BACHELORS.

IN TWO PARTS.—PART I.

It was in the summer of '61 that Jack Ferrars and myself, then gay bachelors of thirty, weary with the business that had surged in upon us during the winter months, rented between us a small shooting in the Western Highlands, with the view of recruiting our wasted energies in a pastime of which we were both very fond. I admired Ferrars almost passionately. He was a fine handsome fellow, with yellow hair and blond moustache, and possessed the gentlemanly manners and easy flow of conversation which I esteemed above all things. But my attachment to Jack was no mere passing admiration of his brilliant parts and fascinating manners; it dated as far back as the days when we were boys at school, and had gone on in an uninterrupted flow ever since, strengthened by the test of time. We had, moreover, numberless things in common, among the most important of which was—we were both confirmed bachelors; in good truth, bachelors proud of the name—bachelors who never intended to be anything but bachelors, and who took a peculiar pleasure in saying so, and in vowing allegiance to each other in a manner that would have done credit to the Corsican brothers.

It was therefore with brilliant anticipations of the delight we were to experience in each other's society, that we found ourselves the occupants of a pretty villa, on the outskirts of a little outlandish place in the Highlands, far removed from all friends and acquaintances. With a sigh of relief, and a delightful feeling of freedom, we wheeled our chairs into the open bow-window on the night of our arrival, and lighting a cigar, sat down to enjoy the really beautiful scene before us. In the foreground lay our own smoothly cut lawn and rectangular flower-beds, with the moonlight falling in pale bright bars over the sleeping flowers; and beyond, the silver loch, whence we could distinctly hear the light laugh of some late pleasure-seekers, as they rowed slowly homewards; while above the loch, the hills rose in dark majestic outline against the pale beauty of the sky. Jack, as apropos to the scene, had been repeating as best he could, between the whiffs of his cigar, Lord Byron's *Lake Leman*; and an animated discussion, which had afterwards arisen on the merits and demerits of that much maligned poet, was suddenly interrupted by a burst of the finest music I had ever heard. It was a splendid soprano voice, accompanied by the guitar, singing the old pathetic Scottish song *Auld Robin Gray*. The expression thrown into the voice was simply exquisite. When the mournful minor key was struck, Jack, snatched his cigar from his lips, leaned forward in a breathless listening attitude, as if afraid to lose a single vibration, and did not move again until the song had ceased. I felt strangely affected myself. I had often listened to the same song before, but never with the soul-thrilling of to-night. As the last cadence died

away, borne over the silvern water to the dark hills, it seemed to me as if it were an angel's whisper over the death-bed of a child.

The sounds proceeded from the open drawing-room windows of the villa next our own; and when at last they ceased, Jack, resuming his cigar in the most prosaic fashion, remarked: 'By Jove! that was good singing, Bob. This is better than a box at the opera; eh, old fellow?'

'It's the finest singing, without exception, I ever listened to,' I answered. 'I hope I won't meet the fair possessor of such an exquisite voice.'

'What an absurd fellow you are! Why?' asked Jack, blowing a long curl of smoke out of the window.

'Oh, because, if she's pretty, I feel as if I should fall in love with her.'

Jack winced at this betrayal of weakness. 'Pshaw! Harding, don't talk like an idiot. Ten to one she's an ugly old wretch, with sunken jaws, and powder enough on her face to last a Lord Chief-justice's wig for six months.'

'I almost hope she is,' I returned, 'for then my heart won't run such a chance of being captured.'

'You're a consummate fool, Harding,' was the flattering encomium of my friend Ferrars.

'Sorry you think so, Jack,' I said; 'but fool or no fool, if that's a pretty young girl, I wouldn't give sixpence for your own chances of retaining your bachelor notions much longer, Jack Ferrars.'

I leaned forward, smiling, to catch a glimpse of his expression in the dim light. A haughty curl was on his lip, and a look of scorn in his blue eyes, which disappeared with a ludicrous rapidity as soon as he observed I was rallying him.

'Ah! Bob, no fear of that,' he said; 'you and I are too jolly together to care about pretty girls, however fascinating—else we'd have been married long ago.'

'I begin to think so, Jack,' I returned; 'and, upon my word, I often wonder how a fellow like you, upon whom scores of designing mammas have had their envious eyes, was never caught.'

'I was just going to make the same remark about you,' said Jack, with a laugh, as he stroked his handsome moustache.

'It seems to me we're a couple of extremely clever fellows,' I answered, rising.

'We're a couple of extremely lucky fellows, at anyrate, to have safely escaped all the snares and fascinations laid for us,' returned Ferrars, shrugging his broad shoulders, and looking the personification of happy bachelorhood as he thus disburdened himself of his anti-matrimonial notions. 'But what say you to a bit of supper, old boy? It is getting late.'

I agreed, and we both descended to the dining-room. Mrs Mason, the worthy housekeeper, had lit a fire in honour of our arrival, and the dying embers now cast a dark red glow on the walls, making a decidedly comfortable appearance, notwithstanding it was a fine autumn night. When we turned up the gas, a cosy little supper laid out for two was displayed, and the wine and fruit we had been using at dinner still stood on the side-board. Never were there two happier, jollier, or more amicable bachelors than Ferrars and I that night, as we sat chatting over our walnuts and claret, and laying out our schemes of enjoyment, until the small-hours warned us that it was high time we were in the primary enjoyment of sleep.

'Good-night, Jack,' I said, as at last we separated for our respective rooms.

'Good-morning, rather,' echoed Jack, as he shut his door; 'and I hope the ghost of Robin Gray won't disturb your slumbers.'

A sharp rat-tat on my bedroom door, and the familiar 'Hollo, old boy!' of Jack outside, awoke me from one of the most delightful and refreshing sleeps I had enjoyed for a long time. To say the least of it, I felt fierce to be thus awakened. 'Confound you, Ferrars,' I shouted; 'what do you want? Be off!'

'Get up, old boy, get up; if you're not out of bed before I count ten, you shall have no breakfast. One—two—three'—

The threat was too awful to be anticipated, and before he had completed the given number, I had unlocked the door for him. He came in with a merry look in his blue eyes, and throwing himself down on the bed I had so unwillingly vacated, began kicking the white counterpane with his dirty boots.

'Jack, man, look what you're doing,' I said, pointing to a mud-splash on the clean linen.

'Mrs Mason will think I tumbled into bed last night in the disreputable condition of not knowing very well what I was about.'

'Just tell her I did it, Bob, and she'll be delighted to put on a fresh counterpane, I am sure. But do you know what I was doing this morning while you were driving your pigs to market?'

'Feeding the chickens, probably,' I answered, feeling cross at Jack's good-humour.

'Guess again,' he said, laughing.

'No; if you don't choose to tell me, my curiosity will wait,' I returned, as I arranged my necktie.

'Well, then, I've been getting on good terms with Mrs Mason, and finding out who our friends of musical repute next door are.'

'The dickens you have!' I ejaculated, pausing in the adjustment of my shirt-studs. Jack nodded, his blue eyes fairly dancing with merriment. 'And the result of your inquiries is'—

'That the household consists of a Colonel Hallam, his wife, and daughter.'

'Is that all you know about them?' I asked, somewhat disappointed at the meagreness of the details, as I put the finishing touches to my toilet.

'You ungrateful scoundrel!' returned Jack. 'Why, the people only arrived here two days ago, and Mrs Mason herself only got the information this morning from the baker's boy at the door.'

'Ah! then it's sure to be correct. But come, let's go down-stairs, and try if we can't get a look at Colonel Hallam or his pretty daughter.'

It was a glorious morning. The sunshine was dancing gleefully on the rippling surface of the loch, and the flowers were lifting their dewy heads, and filling the breakfast-room with their fresh fragrance. A very tempting repast stood awaiting us on the table, and Jack's blue eyes looked not amiss behind the coffee-urn.

'Altogether, this is very pleasant, Jack,' I remarked, as I took the cup he handed to me: 'you look almost pretty enough to kiss, my dear.'

'Come, no chaff. Is your coffee sweet enough?' he returned, affectionately twirling the ends of his blond moustache.

'Oh, it's there all right,' I said, alluding to the handsome appendage; 'I didn't make any mistake about that.' He turned his laughing eyes

on me for an instant, and no sooner had they wandered to the window again, than he started up uttering a long—'whew! I stood up too, following his eyes inquiringly, and there, over the low hedge that divided the gardens, I caught sight of a young girl in a fresh morning dress, engaged in cutting flowers, and daintily arranging them into a bouquet. What we saw of her face under the broad-rimmed hat that shaded it was bright and beautiful.

'Good heavens! Miss Hallam,' said Jack.

'By Jove! Miss Hallam,' echoed I. And we both looked into each other's faces and laughed outright.

'What are you laughing at?' asked Jack, with the utmost inconsistency, as he sat down and resumed his breakfast.

'Just what you're laughing at,' I returned, breaking my egg.

'She's not old or ugly either,' he remarked after a pause.

'By Jove, she isn't!' I answered as I gulped a mouthful of my highly sugared coffee.

'Are you sorry?'

'No. Are you glad?'

'It doesn't matter a rap to me what she is, or is not.'

'You're a cynical old bachelor, Ferrars.'

'Allow me to return the compliment, Harding.'

'I rather meant you to keep it, I think.'

'I decline it with thanks, as not suitable. I'm not cynical.'

'When I wish to expatiate on the charms of a nice young lady, you get as sour as vinegar; now, you know it's true; so not a word in reply; but hurry up, old boy—*tempus fugit*,' and I pulled out my watch.

We were both in a hurry to be off to our sport, and soon all thoughts of Miss Hallam were forgotten in the bustle of arranging our shooting-gear. The wagonette was brought round to the door, and two very happy heart-whole bachelors sprang lightly into it, and were bowled away down the gravel-path, through the gate and out of sight. We had a pretty good day's sport on the moors, and returned home in the best of humour with ourselves, and tired enough to enjoy thoroughly an after-dinner lounge in our drawing-room, which we had converted *pro tem.* into a smoking-room, and ornamented in every available place with meerschaums, tobacco, and cigar-boxes.

Upon this evening, Jack, who was a fair player on the pianoforte, was performing the *Blue Bells of Scotland*, with much elaborate flourishing and crossing of hands, and I, as the audience, was stretched on three chairs at the window, lazily smoking my cigar in that sort of half-dreamy, comatose state that one feels in the enjoyment of well-earned leisure and rest. I cannot say that I was altogether in raptures over the *Blue Bells*, but perhaps they helped to promote the pleasant tenor of my thoughts as I lay with my eyes half-closed, letting the smoke from my weed curl affectionately in the folds of Mrs Mason's lace-curtains. 'How jolly Ferrars and I are together,' I chuckled to myself; 'this little trip of ours is going to be altogether a success. Girls are well enough to meet occasionally, but they become a bore. Now, suppose I had a wife with me here instead of Jack, she wouldn't be content unless she had the house filled with visitors and servants, and'—

Just at this interesting juncture of my ruminations, the flourishing and dashing at the piano stopped, and presently the chairs on which my legs were resting were pulled from under me, and I was left ignominiously sprawling on the carpet, with Jack's face grinning down at me in evident enjoyment of my discomfiture. But my fall did not cause me to forget the thread of my meditations, and as I gathered up my elegant limbs, I remarked: 'My wife would not have done *that*, Jack.'

'No; she would have kissed the poor tired darling, and thrown a shawl gently over him, to keep him from catching cold,' said Jack in a tone of mock-affection.

'Picture of domestic happiness!' I returned, laughing, as I readjusted the chairs. 'Hark! what is that?'

The stillness of the night outside was broken by the same exquisite music we had listened to on the previous evening. In an instant our banter was hushed. It was a gay lively air, which I recognised as a selection from the *Student's Frolic*, and the singer seemed even more at home in this style than in the pathetic. It made me feel as joyous as a bird in spring, and had I not been too lazy, I could have danced, in the very exuberance of my spirits.

'Jack, we must get an introduction to that little girl,' I cried enthusiastically, throwing my half-finished cigar out of the window.

But, to my surprise, Jack seemed in no mood to talk, and kept staring out of the window, taking no notice of my remark. Feeling aggrieved at not being met with the storm of opposition and contempt I expected for proposing such a thing, I went over and slightly shook him, at which he ran his fingers through his blond curls, and looking up with an expression of innocent surprise, asked: 'What is it?'

'Wouldn't you like an introduction to Miss Hallam?' I repeated.

'Why, yes; of course, Harding: you needn't have shaken a fellow half out of his senses to ask that silly question; and Jack readjusted his broad shoulders and relapsed into silence again. I tried to talk of Miss Hallam, music, literature, politics, but all to no purpose; he sat staring out of the window, as if the seven wonders of the world were visible on our patch of moonlit lawn. Rather disgusted, I left him star-gazing, and retired to bed; but as I went up-stairs I must own to a little curiosity as to the cause that had made my amiable and talkative friend suddenly so laconic and disagreeable.

MARSTON ROCK.

ON the coast of Durham, about midway between the mouth of the Tyne and the town of Sunderland, stands, detached from the shore, a curious craggy mass, termed the Marston Rock. A huge instalment of the rock, through which the perpetual action of the waves has effected many passages, leaves here and there supports, which form lofty arches, and permit, at certain times of tide, the intrusion of visitors. A narrow flight of steps, assisted by a ladder, carried out over the sands at low-water, permits of the venturesome climbing to its summit, on which rabbits have been colonised, and breed, and often fall over its edge to

meet a certain death. In one of the chambers formed by the waves is a rude seat, called the 'Wishing-chair,' to which women resort, even from considerable distances, and there sit in the lap of Faith, as if they still lived in medieval times. Another narrow and zigzag flight of some hundred steps on the cliff proper, opposite to this rock, carries us down to the shore. Here is the *Grotto Hotel*, a little inn, a couple of rooms in which we were fortunate in securing.

Let the reader picture to himself a house of fifteen rooms, all hewn, principally by the elements, out of the solid limestone. The first that we enter is common to all, and of an irregular shape. Its furniture is composed of odds and ends—old sea-chests and drawers, cabin stools of divers patterns and forms, all and each unquestionably of the flotsam and jetsam class. The stairs which lead from this apartment—part bar-parlour, part kitchen, and part bedroom—are of ship-timber, with the calking-holes open. This staircase (as well as those without, which ascend to a balcony) is railed with jolly-boat oars; but the great novelty of the interior is, that wherever the bare and exquisitely beautiful rock could be utilised, there it is left in its pristine state, whether for walls, floor, or ceiling. The interior staircase led to our sitting-room, one side of which was entirely of this limestone, and which we could only compare to a large unrolled and exquisitely coloured geological map. Nor was art wanting in our pretty suite of apartments, to which, if we pleased, we had uncontrolled access by a rustic staircase, without passing through the room before described. On the walls hung some well-executed water-colours, grateful souvenirs of artists that had come before us; an elegant piano in one corner; a sofa and easy state-cabin chairs spoke of the luxury of repose; and some well-chosen *tomes*—the more acceptable from being in reference to the localities of Durham—formed a select library. Flowers adorned our windows, and between their glorious bunches of blossom we obtained a view of the smiling or angry ocean, as its humour in turns would take. Ours, however, was a week of peace, and so was that of the far-stretching sea. But this is indeed a most frightful coast in bad weather, and the raging ocean has occasionally taken possession of the lower rooms, put out the kitchen fires, and driven the inmates to seek shelter in the upper parts of the dwelling. The outer buildings of the grotto are constructed entirely of the *débris* of numerous wrecks, which testify by countless mementoes of these dire calamities. Wreck, wreck is everywhere—it pervades the chamber, the kitchen, and even the rifle-yard, in which were a store of floatabilities, each possibly with its history of some struggling wretch who had grasped it in the frenzied effort at rescue from a fearful death, and, mayhap after all, gone down in sight of my snug and cosy lodging. This conviction was the more and more obvious as I carried on my explorations in out-of-the-way recesses not usually entered by strangers, unless of a curious turn of mind. Even the dancing saloon—hewn out of the solid rock, and measuring seventy-five feet long and twenty-four feet broad—the flooring, and orchestra are portions of wrecks. Indeed, the door is cut out of a ship's rudder, and studded thickly with ships' nails, while the heavy iron ring of an anchor serves as a knocker. I could not ascend a step

without grasping portions of masts or clinging to a port-hole, while figure-heads met me at every turn. Here was a carved bust of 'Admiral Rodney,' there one of 'Mercury,' and others with lettered titles—'The Saucy Sally,' 'Constellation,' 'Four Brothers,' 'The Isis,' 'The Life Guard,' all serving to individualise and intensify this feeling; a sentiment which, for a mile or two in our slippery wanderings to the south, over labyrinths of fallen and weed-tangled rocks, received additional strength from the numerous fragments of wreck half-buried in sand, or tossed about in the spray of the broken waves. Yet amongst all this we were supremely happy, experiencing the utmost freedom both mentally and physically, according to our own notions; but perhaps some stray coastguard-man, had he watched our movements, as we, inspired by the pure ozone, scrambled with naked legs over apparently insurmountable barriers, to gain another and another point of view for our folio, or heard us shouting like a maniac, to drown the roar of the sea as it entered one of the many caverns, and rose through apertures far inland in white clouds, might in mercy have deemed it prudent that we should not have been left alone.

Of these caverns there are very many—indeed, they succeed each other sometimes in rapid succession, and are here and there connected; often having small channels, which tempted us to crawl on hands and knees to see where they led to. One of these, with a large irregular domed roof, has a perfectly cut circular hole in its loftiest portion, through which, by standing immediately underneath, we could detect daylight. We found that this hole opened on to the surface of the cliff, unrailed and unguarded, amidst and partly hidden by thick and stunted foliage. We must have passed it within a foot or so on our route!

A certain noted smuggler had arranged for a lugger to discharge its cargo here. As the time arrived at night that the vessel ought to be approaching the coast, and a signal shewn from the cave to indicate safety, a man long suspected of treachery was missing. The smuggler, therefore, to warn the skipper to keep away, set his dogs barking, and let off his gun, which brought the coastguard down (who turned out to be close by), but who were told by the smuggler that thieves had attempted to enter the hut. The skipper, taking the hint, had sheered off. The officers then made for Shields, and there found the vessel the next day, entered her, and seized some thirty casks of tobacco?—no, of bilge-water. The facts were that, upon receiving the signal, and knowing that the legal posse were collected elsewhere, the captain tacked about, and the cargo was landed in a lonely cove near Souter Point, where it was packed, after the fashion of beetroot, in an open field, which the officers passed for days after without the knowledge of the prize within their reach. A few mornings after, their attention was aroused by the sudden removal in the night of this heap, and then, and not until then, they recollected that its formation was equally mysterious. The story would not be complete without its touch of horror. For years after, moans were heard to proceed from this hole in the cliff, and no one would approach or pass it after night-fall. The cause assigned for these lamentations was, that the smuggler who attempted to betray the gang, being caught, was placed in a tub, and hauled up by a rope under the hole, and only let

down once a day, to receive some scant food and the gibes of his mates, his situation rendered yet more cruel from his position permitting him to witness his comrades feasting, and being made a target for the refuse of their festivities.

There are old men who still remember having seen as many as thirty pack-horses laden with spirits, and ridden or attended by as many armed smugglers, conveying whisky over the moors. One of the last efforts of smuggling on this coast is related by Murray, and shews that the excise officers are not always outwitted. A man died, and instead of his relatives ordering his 'kist' or coffin to be made by the neighbouring joiner in England, had his coffin made at Jedburgh, in Scotland, and instead of using the parish hearse, sent for a hearse from the same place. This came to the ears of the Border rider or revenue officer, who, struck by the peculiarity of the circumstances, mounted his famous black horse, ascertained the time of the funeral, and met the hearse just on the English side of the Border. He stopped the procession, and demanded in the king's name to examine the hearse. Hearse and coffin were both full of kegs of whisky. He immediately confiscated horses, hearse, coffin, and whisky; and, as he said, 'they went away mourners in good earnest.'

R E S T.

BENEATH the western heaven's span
Has sunk the golden day;
The clouds' rich sunset hues and tints
Have died in shade away;
The dim night comes from out the east
With gloom and vapour gray.

The stars far in the sky's blue depths
Their vigils 'gin to keep;
The moon above yon eastern hill
Climbs up the lofty steep;
The night-winds steal with gentle wing
Above the flowers asleep.

The birds upon the tuneless spray
Have folded close their wings;
And to the silent night alone
The winding river sings:
Its song is of the woods and meads,
A hundred happy things.

No voice is in the tranquil air,
No murmur save its own;
The earth is hushed as heaven above,
Where, girt with cloudy zone,
The moon goes up among the stars
To take her ebon throne.

Sweet calm, and undisturbed repose,
O'er all the landscape rest;
Yet is there in the breathless scene
A voice which thrills the breast,
A something, which in thanks and love
May only be expressed.

Printed and Published by W. & R. CHAMBERS, 47 Paternoster Row, LONDON, and 339 High Street, EDINBURGH.
Also sold by all Booksellers.